



**Defence
Infrastructure
Organisation**

St George's House
Defence Infrastructure Organisation
Head Office
DMS Whittington
Lichfield
Staffordshire



Canterbury Local Plan Team
Canterbury City Council Offices
Military Road
Canterbury
CT1 1YW

16th January 2023

DELIVERED BY EMAIL:

Draft Canterbury District Local Plan 2020 to 2045

Dear Local Plan Team,

I am writing in response to the recent publication of the Consultation Draft of the Canterbury District Local Plan and your request for comments by 16th January 2023.

Background

As you may be aware the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) is seeking to establish the foundation for the 'right-sized' military estate of the future. There is a strong military imperative that the quality and performance of the Defence estate must be enhanced in order to sustain, and in places, improve, military capability. Given current and future funding pressures, this can only be achieved if the estate is significantly smaller and more efficiently utilised, in order to achieve the best value for money from Defence funds. As part of this exercise MOD is considering the future of Old Park Training Area, approximately 92 HA of land to the east of Canterbury which falls within the local plan area.

Old Park Training Area was submitted in the Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) for consideration for a variety of uses. It is noted that the SLAA deemed the site as not suitable for further consideration stating "half of the site is located in a SSSI and there are concerns regarding landscape and ecology impact".

It is considered of note, however, that ecological designations do not apply across the whole

of the site and the presence of such designations did not prevent other draft designations such as that at Canterbury Golf driving range for housing under Draft Policy C15 on the adjacent site or the Canterbury Eastern Movement Corridor in Policy C16. Further it is also noted that Policy C15 appears to indicate opportunities for 'new cycling and walking connections' across MOD land to the north of Realmwood Close.

The Southwest Area of Old Park training area is immediately adjacent to the defined settlement boundary of Canterbury on three sides and there are areas of the site that were once developed providing training facilities including a 25m range, though this has now been vacated and removed by the Defence Training Estate. There are, therefore, parts of Old Park site which are already vacant and developable in the short term and strong parallels can be drawn between this site and the golf driving range which has a draft allocation for development within draft policy C15.

MOD note that, in addition to the reference to opportunities for walking and cycling across its land in Policy C15 an area of land totaling approximately 11.5 HA has been included within Draft Policy C24 – Land to the south of Sturry Road for the purposes of The Canterbury Nutrient Migration Strategy. MOD cautiously welcome this draft policy, however, would highlight there are a number of outstanding issues to resolve.

In relation to the proposed Canterbury Eastern Movement Corridor in Policy C16 the route appears to traverse land in MOD ownership and the detail needs to be discussed and understood.

Finally it is suggested that further consideration needs to be given to the broader opportunities presented by Old Park Training Area and how these can be integrated into the plan as well as looking at and further assessing smaller parcels of land within the overall site area – as suggested within the previous call for sites submission.

MOD trust the above will receive your full consideration and look forward to engaging with the further stages of the Local Plan review and on the future development at Old Park Training Area.

We would also be grateful if notification of any consultation on further stages of the plan could be sent to [REDACTED] and copied to;

[REDACTED]

Should you have any queries regarding the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Matthew Ellis | BA (Hons) MA MRTPI | Senior Town Planner | Estates |
St George's House | Defence Infrastructure Organisation Head Office
DMS Whittington | Lichfield | Staffordshire | WS14 9PY